

Kenosha Creative Economy Strategic Plan: Community Conversation

February 9, 2017 | 6:30 – 8 pm

Emerging strategies for discussion:

- 1. Develop downtown placemaking.** Downtown placemaking can include a variety of creative projects and events intended to activate public spaces, revitalize downtown areas, and bring people together. Examples include: public art installations such as the Sculpture Walk, and the Creative Space in Downtown Kenosha.
- 2. Establish live/work space for artists.** Establishing affordable places for artists to live and work provides a sustainable anchor for creativity and can re-energize areas in a community. Artspace, a leading nonprofit developer of these projects, identified Kenosha as a potential great candidate for such a development.
- 3. Bolster art/culture funding through philanthropy:** Exploring new and better ways of coordinating funding for the arts could provide a real boost to the arts and cultural sector. This could be through things like pooled donations through a central grantmaker, exploring government policies or tax incentives, or aligning corporate giving strategies across Kenosha.
- 4. Secure partnerships between art/culture institutions and Kenosha businesses and develop opportunities for collaboration.** There are many ways in which local businesses can work with arts organizations to leverage arts and culture in order to attract and retain creative talent. Examples include: local business sponsorship of cultural events or local corporations hosting local artists' work in their offices.
- 5. Improve community marketing.** Developing a cohesive brand and marketing plan for the Kenosha area can be a key way to inform and manage perceptions of the community (for both residents and visitors). The brand could include a focus on creativity and arts, providing a unified voice across multiple channels.
- 6. Align educational systems to prepare youth for creative careers.** KUSD has very strong arts programming, and UW-Parkside, Carthage College, and Gateway Technical College develop creative talent primed to contribute to the local economy. Building the connection between educational institutions and the Kenosha area is important to encourage a robust creative economy and combat "brain drain."
- 7. Entrepreneurship incubation with resources and leadership development.** Incubators provide access to resources and other support services that may help improve small businesses' likelihood of success. Incubators can serve as a place for cross-sector collaboration, learning opportunities, and mentorships.
- 8. Revitalize neighborhoods through the arts.** There is a lot of focus on developing the downtown area with creative activity, but similar initiatives can take place in neighborhoods to reinvigorate Kenosha as a whole. For example, in Kenosha, arts programs have been reintroduced in several neighborhood parks.